Power Station, Ukai Vs Hind Mzdoor Sabha and Ors. recommended inter alia that the appropriate Government on its own should take initiative to abolish the labour contracts in the establishments concerned by following the procedure laid down under the Act.

(c) A copy of the judgement has been sent to all Ministries/Departments and State Governments for taking appropriate action.

[Translation]

Development of New Tourist Spots

1787. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the amount spent on the development of new tourist spots set up during 1995-96;

(b) the number of tourist spots opened during the said period;

(c) the number of tourist places which are proposed to be opened during 1996-97; and

(d) the share of the Central and State Governments in the expenditure incurred on the development of new tourist spots?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) and (b). The Department of Tourism, Government of India has released an amount of Rs.1751.48 lakhs for 182 projects during 1995-96 to the State Governments/Union Territories for the development of tourist infrastructure. Identification and development of tourist spots is a continuous process and is primarily the responsibility of the State Government/ Union Territory.

(c) and (d). 116 projects have been identified for Central Financial Assistance during 1996-97 in consultation with the State Governments.

[English]

Consumer Protection Act

1788. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of CI SUPPLIES CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the the Union Government have received any request from some of the State Governments or voluntary organisations to amend the Consumers Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. Central Government had constituted a Working Group to suggest suitable amendments to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and the Rules framed thereunder, to makes it more effective and purposeful. The suggestions received from the various State Governments and voluntary organisations have been duly examined by the Working Group. The Working Group has submitted its report which contains several recommendations. As the recommendations pertain to various Ministries/Departments, discussions/ consultations with them are in progress so as to finalise the amendments of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

Contract to Russian Company

1789. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has recently awarded a multi-crore contract in Bhilai to a Russian Company, M/s. Tyazhpromexport (TPE) which is alleged to have been involved in the Hawala pay-off case;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether SAIL and the Union Government have considered the alleged involved of the TPE before the contract was awarded to TPE; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (d) Bhilai Steel Plant/SAIL has awarded in January, 1996, a contract to M/s Tyazhpromexport (TPE) Russia, for turn-key package of Raw Material Storage & Handling System of Sinter Plant No. 3 at Bhilai Steel Plant.

The order was placed on the basis of competitive bidding and after following transparent procedures, at a total order value of Rs.181.310 crores on M/s TPE as principal contractor and M/s Tyzhprom - India Private Limited as their Indian associate. The implementation schedule of the project is 27 months from 10.1.96 i.e., the date of the signing of the contract.

Neither SAIL nor the Ministry of Steel has any information about the alleged involvement of M/s TPE in the Hawala case.

[Translation]

Expansion of Telephone Facilities in Bihar

1790. SHRI LALIT ORAON : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any scheme for the expansion of telephone services in Gumla, Lohardaga and Ranchi Districts of Bihar;

(b) if so, the names of the Divisional Head offices which are proposed to be covered under this scheme, and